

DELTA

A person in a blue shirt is shown in profile, holding a glowing lantern. The lantern emits a bright light that illuminates a large, dark space filled with numerous small, glowing particles, resembling sparks or embers, that are falling from above. The background is a mix of dark green and black, with some orange and red tones on the right side, suggesting a sunset or a similar atmospheric setting. The overall mood is one of wonder and discovery.

A Collection of Student Essays

Volume 32
2019

WINDS

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

In the fall of 1991, the first volume of Delta Winds appeared for sale for \$2.00 in the bookstore of San Joaquin Delta College. Newly-hired English faculty member Jane Dominik created the magazine with the intent of publishing student essays that “merit a wider reading audience.” Five years later, while standing in line for the commencement ceremonies, she asked Robert Bini and William Agopsowic to take over the reins of her project, which by then had become well-received in the English Department. They agreed under the condition that her biannual publication become an annual publication. They knew they could never keep up with Jane’s pace, but they figured that two of them could do half the work that she did. And even so, it would be a challenge.

Over a year period, Bob and Will continued to identify student essays deserving of a wider reading audience. Thanks to a sabbatical leave in 2000, they were able to create an online version of Delta Winds to complement the print version. In doing so, they expanded the audience from those obtaining the locally distributed 800 print copies to an unlimited number of readers on the Internet. With that came easier distribution, and in time publishing houses were regularly knocking on their door, requesting to reprint Delta Winds essays in their textbooks.

It has been a real privilege to carry on the rich tradition that Jane, Bob, and Will have passed on to us. It has also been an honor to meet some of the students who comprise this current volume (number 32) of Delta Winds, and we know many readers will find their stories heartfelt and inspirational. We hope this magazine serves as a tribute to these gifted student writers, and we hope that their work will be shared in English courses not just here at Delta but at other institutions of higher education.

Each volume of the magazine would never have been published without the help of personnel in the print shop, the backing from the administration, the cooperation from the staff and faculty in the English Department, and, of course, the courage of the numerous students who cautiously submitted their personal creations.

Enjoy,

Kathleen McKilligan and Eric MacDonald

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Nightmare That Lasts A Lifetime

by Alyssa Saabye

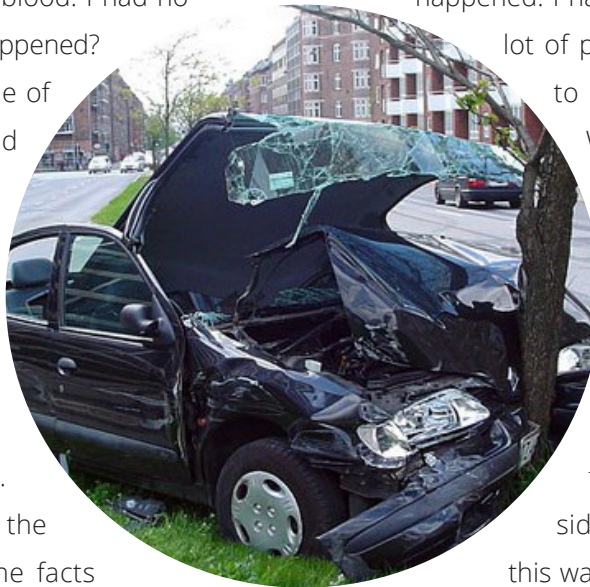
Red and blue lights with loud sirens surrounded me as I sat on the curb soaking wet. I remember shivering and the feeling of blood trickle down my face. My white Abercrombie sweater, light blue jeans, and white shoes were stained with dark red blood. I had no recollection of my accident. What happened? Where was I? Why was I wet? None of those questions were answered right away. Instead, I was slammed to the ground and placed under arrest for a reason I did not know. The ice-cold handcuffs that were roughly placed around my wrists, were what made this foggy nightmare become a reality for me.

As the night unraveled at the police station, I began piecing the facts together. I was under the influence of alcohol when I got in my car to drive home that night. More specifically, I was blacked out drunk. Witnesses that were at the party with me told the police that I was spotted stumbling and falling over while walking to my vehicle. Why did none of

from my home when I lost control of my car and caused a horrific accident.

The police asked me question after question, and I had no answers because I truly had no idea what happened. I had a terrible headache and was in a lot of pain. I remember crying and asking to go home, but I had no such luck. When the police showed me the recording and pictures of the scene of my accident, I was in shock. My car was smashed to pieces and unrecognizable. I struck two parked vehicles, two fences, a mailbox, and a fire hydrant. The fire hydrant went through my driver's side door, and I quickly learned that this was the reason I was soaking wet. The impact of my car hitting the fire hydrant caused water to go spewing approximately 50 feet into the air. I then realized that I was extremely lucky to be alive, and even more fortunate that I was the only person involved in the accident.

Although the memories of that night are painful to revisit, it was the aftermath of the accident that changed my life forever. I was convicted of Driving Under the Influence, also known as a DUI. The consequences of my actions were much harsher since I was not of legal age to even drink. Spending the night in jail was the least of my worries I later came to find out. I had mandatory court dates spread throughout the next year of my life, and missing one would



Red and blue lights with loud sirens surrounded me as I sat on the curb soaking wet.

my friends stop me? Where was the party? I later found out that the party was around the corner from my parents' house, where I lived at the time. I was less than one block

result in jail time. I had one hundred hours of community service to complete, six months of Alcoholics Anonymous to attend, six months of weekly DUI classes that costed me a total of \$2000, and a charge that would be on my record forever. On top of that, the courts ordered me to pay an \$8,000.00 fee for my crime. I was only eighteen years old at the time and had barely graduated high school. What was supposed to be the best year of my life quickly turned out to be the worst.

For months after my accident, I suffered from frequent night terrors. I would wake up screaming and crying from the same nightmare, night after night. The nightmare was my accident, but even worse because I dreamt I killed a family. The blood, tears, and body bags were so vivid in my dreams that I felt it was real. I still have this terrible nightmare to this day, nearly ten years later. Looking back at my harsh reality, I am most thankful that I was the only person who got hurt that night. This disaster has affected my life in every way possible, including the type of car I drive, the job I have, the people I surround myself with, and the way I live my life. Almost ten years later, this awful accident has crept back into my

life and nearly shattered my dream of pursuing a career in child care. I recently landed an excellent job at a preschool facility with great benefits. It took six months for the results of my fingerprints and background check to come through. I was honest about everything on the paperwork, but it didn't matter. I had to file an appeal and get a clearance to work with children again. It has been almost a year and I still do not have an answer. I lost my job at the preschool and had to go back to working in restaurants to support my family. I am still waiting on a decision to see if I can continue my career path towards child care. I am hopeful for my future, but I also accept my faults.

In conclusion, this experience has changed my life in many ways. I am thankful to be alive, and thankful for the fact that I didn't harm or kill anybody in the accident. I paid my fees and did my time, but it doesn't erase the fact that it happened. I have learned to be in control of my life and make responsible decisions. I had a near-death experience at a very young age, and can honestly say it has shaped me into the person I am today. I believe that this lesson has changed my life in a positive way, and if it never happened, I would be in jail or possibly even dead today.



Children & Technology: A Look Into A Form of Addiction

by Bethany Parks

An article in The Telegraph states that “In the same way we can use a brick to either break a window or build a house, digital technology can be used for good or bad” (qtd. in Paton). Every year, more and more children are being given tablets, smartphones, video game consoles, etc. Regarding the screen time infants and toddlers have every day, Victoria Ward reports that “One in seven of more than 1,000 parents questioned by babies.co.uk website admitted that they let them [infants and young children] use the gadgets for four or more hours a day” (Ward). Also, another survey done on over five hundred teenagers ages thirteen to eighteen years old revealed that “9% of them spent more than 8 hours online. 36% admitted to falling asleep regularly with their smart phones. 67% admitted reaching out to smart phones while feeling bored” (“Gadget Addiction”). Overall, psychiatrists estimate that the number of children who have become digitally dependent has risen by over 30 percent since 2010 (Ward). If their screen time isn’t carefully siphoned, access to technology can be harmful to children. It becomes an addiction and, therefore, is being used for bad. Young children and older children alike shouldn’t use technology excessively because it is addicting, and it is detrimental to their lives, specifically to their health.

Parents are now giving iPads, tablets, and even smartphones to their children younger and younger every year without much thought as to the effects of this action. Toddlers, and even infants, now use technology regularly. According to an article in The Atlantic, “Without seeming to think much about it or resolve how they felt, parents began giving their devices over to their children to mollify, pacify, or otherwise entertain them” (Rosin 56). Giving technology over to toddlers at such an early age to calm them down, get them to be quiet, educate them, or whatever practical purpose a parent might give technology to their young children for poses a problem, as they quickly become glued to these devices. Hanna Rosin, a writer for The Atlantic, reports, “Most parents can sympathize with the disturbing sight of a toddler, who five minutes earlier had been jumping off the couch, now subdued and staring at a screen, seemingly hypnotized” (Rosin 56). On the surface this seems like an easy win-win solution, but it has more “side” effects than parents realize. Technology becomes a lifestyle for toddlers, something that they expect to get whenever they want it. They become immersed in, and even addicted to, these devices so early on in their lives. According to an article in The Telegraph, “... young technology addicts experienced the same withdrawal symptoms as alcoholics or heroin addicts, when the devices were taken away” (Ward).



Dr. Graham, the first person to launch a technology addiction rehab program in the UK, tells The Telegraph that “They [infants and toddlers] can’t cope and become addicted, reacting with tantrums and uncontrollable behaviour when they [their devices] are taken away. Then as they grow older, the problem only gets worse” (qtd. in Ward). Dr. Graham’s program helps infants, toddlers, and young children who’ve become addicted to their devices recover. In a sense, it’s therapy and rehabilitation for young children who have a technology addiction. Although the effects of this type of addiction are like that of alcohol and drug addictions, this technology addiction in infants and toddlers is different in the way it manifests itself in children. It’s something most parents bring upon them and their children without even realizing it. One example of a toddler addicted to technology is one shared by Guy Adams, a reporter for The Daily Mail, about his own three-year-old son William. His son William had always been a “wonderful, loving boy” before one specific incident that raised the concern for him and his wife. One night, William got up in the middle of the night and woke up his parents, begging them for his iPad to play on. After being rejected the iPad and directed back to bed, William snuck out and stole the iPad. He played on it the rest of the night and was still playing on it when his parents got up in the morning. As soon as the iPad was confiscated from him, William started to cry. Although that’s not unusual for a toddler, what made his parents worried was the fact that he started screaming, throwing a tantrum so big that they couldn’t even feed him breakfast. Somehow, they still managed to send him to preschool and, later that day, William’s teacher reported to his parents that William

had been very lethargic for some reason. This was the climax, the point where William’s parents really investigated his technology consumption, since it had never been a problem before. They soon realized this wasn’t the first occasion that William had lost his temper when attempts to ration his screen time were made. He would stamp his feet and hit his parents and younger sister. He would seem to be in a “hypnotic trance” when using the iPad, losing his temper when it got taken away, and constantly requesting it when he didn’t already have it. Technology had always been a part of William’s life, and he soon grew addicted to Peppa Pig and Angry Birds. His father, Guy Adams, said that “William has become an iPad addict.” After a “technology detox” treatment, and a successful rehabilitation, William is only allowed a meager, controlled amount of screen time so that he remains addiction-free (Adams). This story is only one of many stories about parents who aren’t aware of the consequences that result in giving their toddlers, and even infants, devices for various reasons. Compulsive behavior, including tantrums and trances, are part of the consequences that parents see in their children. Other than addiction and all that follows that, excessive use of

Giving technology over to toddlers at such an early age to calm them down, get them to be quiet, educate them, or whatever practical purpose a parent might give technology to their young children for poses a problem, as they quickly become glued to these devices.

technology in young children has effects on the motor skills of young infants and toddlers. In another article from The Telegraph, “Rising numbers of infants lack the motor skills needed to play with building blocks because of an



'addiction' to tablet computers and smartphones ...

Many children aged just three or four can 'swipe a screen' but have little or no dexterity in their fingers after spending hours glued

to iPads" (qtd. in Paton). From

infants to toddlers, the effect long hours of playing on iPads has on their fine motor skills is very serious. Young children are now losing dexterity in their fingers, not even being physically able to build with blocks. Also, the attention span of a child has decreased since access to technology became more available. According to Colin Kinney, a teacher and speaker at teachers and lecturers conferences, "[There's] talk of pupils who come into their classrooms after spending most of the previous night playing computer games and whose attention span is so limited that they may as well not be there" (qtd. in Paton). Besides not getting a good night's rest for school the next day, children who use technology at night have very shortened attention spans at school the next day. And, naturally, this makes the quality of their schoolwork suffer. Young children are also having trouble with socialization at school because of their addiction to technology. Kinney also says, "I have spoken to a number of nursery teachers who have concerns over the increasing numbers of young pupils... who cannot socialise with other pupils but whose parents talk proudly of their ability to use a tablet or smartphone (qtd. in Paton). Nursery teachers, the equivalent of pre-school teachers, report that these young toddlers, whose parents say that they can adequately use technology (and do use regularly), are incapable of socializing with their peers. By granting their young children unlimited access to tablets and phones, parents are trading in social skills for technological skills.

Addiction, anger issues, zoning out, lack of motor skills, and the inability to socialize are some of the consequences as a result of free range of technology in infants and toddlers.

Like any debatable issue, there are some people who disagree with the stance that technology is unhealthy and addicting for children. First, some argue that advances in technology are helping, rather than harming, children. This is valid. In fact, there was a survey done on children ages thirteen to fourteen. They were interviewed, and they reported that technology has improved their lives in many ways. The Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal writes that "The adolescents in this study also demonstrated a wide range of affect associated with their advanced technology ability that included: delight in their creativity, fun in game playing ('World of War Craft - it's extremely fun'), hopefulness about their future in technology ... affirmation with problem solving, and enjoyment in interactions with their friends" (qtd. in Fitton 407, 408). Clearly, these adolescents have a positive outlook on technology and how they use it.

They soon realized this wasn't the first occasion that William had lost his temper when attempts to ration his screen time were made. He would stamp his feet and hit his parents and younger sister. He would seem to be in a "hypnotic trance" when using the iPad, losing his temper when it got taken away, and constantly requesting it when he didn't already have it.

However, this study was strictly a survey, only what the children had to say about technology and nothing else. There was no scientific evidence that their creativity was

boosted, that they had increased problem-solving skills, or that they were more social. Meanwhile, there is boundless amounts of research and examples saying that excessive exposure to technology, in fact, does the opposite. In *Glow Kids*, there is a story about a teenager who was addicted to the same game that the surveyed children said was fun – *World of War Craft*. He became disoriented and out of touch with reality due to this role-playing game. He would hallucinate and would think he was literally in the video game, even when he was nowhere near his game console. He couldn't perform simple tasks, make eye contact, or hold a coherent conversation (Kardaras 8). This game clearly didn't improve his social and problem-solving skills. There are many stories like this teenager's addiction, which insinuate that technology doesn't help children and teens. These games may be "fun," but that's where it ends. Also, some people claim that techno literacy is important for kids to have, since most of them will need those skills in their future jobs. In the same study done by the *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, "They [the children being interviewed] spoke to the necessity of technology proficiency for future educational and career goals and reported that parents encouraged IT use to promote competence and success. 'I will need to know technology to get a good job'" (qtd. in Fitton 405). Nevertheless, there are more cons to techno literacy than there are pros. At ages like twelve and thirteen, children don't have enough discipline and responsibility to stay focused on necessary activities, instead of mindless technological activities. For example, "... under the pretense of 'staying connected with mom and dad,' kids who have phones in school can text friends, play music, watch YouTube videos, tweet, post photos on Instagram and play video games to their hearts' content" (Kardaras 107). And they do. Teachers have trouble keeping their students on task in the classroom due to these distractions (Kardaras 107). It's evident



that these young children don't yet hold the work ethic in them to dedicate themselves to IT literacy. And, while some children may have technological proficiency, many of them haven't developed the patience for it yet; and, the continual dinging of notifications from their smartphones isn't helping their attention span in any way. Next, many people suggest that their children are safer on their screens indoors and at home, than outside. After the disappearance of a little boy, Etan Patz, the helicopter parent generation arose. Parents believed that their kids truly were safer indoors, rather than outside where who knew what could happen to their children (Kardaras 191). But, it has been found by researchers that the micro-management parents incur on their children's lives is actually unhealthy for them. And, children also need to get outdoors in the fresh air, engaging in more physical activities to aid in proper physical development (Kardaras). What parents think they're doing to benefit and help their children is actually hindering their growth more than parents know.

Older children and teens are affected by how much technology they use, even more so than younger children and infants. Video and computer games are especially addicting for older children because dopamine is released in their brains when they partake in these over-stimulating games. According to Dr. Nicholas Kardaras, a leading expert on kids and digital addiction, "The most primitive part of our brains—the medulla and cerebellum—cradle our ancient dopamine-reward pathways. And when an action has a feel-good result—like finding food or discovering something new on the Internet or in a video game—dopamine is released, which feels pleasurable and creates a more-we-get-more-we-want addictive cycle" (20, 21). Also, the director of UCLA's Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior, "... has called computers and computer games 'electronic cocaine'" (qtd. in Kardaras 21). Gaming is addicting because it activates the dopamine pathways in

the brain, which makes one feel like they're being rewarded. Naturally, this causes children and teens to crave more of this "reward" and that's how the addiction to technology starts. Also, children who use technology get adrenaline rushes from the dopamine, compromising their health. Dr. Kardaras says that "... today's tech keeps the adrenaline and the fight-or-flight response on perpetual high alert for hour after hour of game play. That constant adrenal stress is not a good thing; the immune system gets compromised, inflammation increases, and cortisol and blood pressure spike" (21, 22). This adrenal stress from "hour after hour of game play" is clearly not healthy for children, or anyone for that matter. It causes inflammation, high blood pressure, and low immune systems. Still, video games aren't the only aspect of technology that damages the health of children and teens. Severe depression is another effect of regular Internet use. In *Glow Kids*, "A 2012 Missouri State University study of 216 kids showed that 30 percent of Internet users showed signs of depression and that the depressed kids were the most intense Web users ... A 2014 study in the journal *Comprehensive Psychiatry* that looked at 2,293 seventh-graders found that Internet addiction exacerbated depression, hostility and social anxiety" (qtd. in Kardaras 127). Simply using the Internet excessively leads to health issues like depression and anxiety in children. It doesn't stop there, though. Depression due to technology use often leads to suicide. Dr. Kardaras writes, "... sadly, there have been several instances of teenagers who have indeed committed suicide related to social media issues" (100). *Glow Kids* is full of real, honest stories of teens who were addicted to social media but were cyber-bullied or pressured into sending/posting things they later regretted. In a chapter of *Glow Kids* titled "The Big Disconnect," there are five specific stories of teens who were bullied through social media and/or texts and, not being able to withstand the bullying, hung themselves in their own homes (Kardaras 100-103). Although not all children and teens who use social media come to that end, it's important to realize that there are some who do. Social media has negative impacts

on the young generations who utilize this opportunity to connect with people. Social media exposes young users and puts them at risk. Though social media tries to connect people and create more "socialized" people, it seems to be doing the opposite, making loneliness a serious problem in today's youth. In the *Modesto Bee*, a former surgeon says, "During my years caring for patients ... the most common pathology I saw was not heart disease or diabetes; it was loneliness" (qtd. in Brooks). The article goes on to say that "Teens are suddenly less likely to date, less likely to leave the home without their parents, more likely to put off the activities of adulthood. They are spending more time with their digital screens; the more screen time, the more unhappiness" (Brooks). If children and teens are always using technology, then their personal, real-life relationships are put on the back-burner. They're trading in physical interaction with people for cyber interaction through social media. This leads to unhappiness and, yes, loneliness. Loneliness is intertwined with depression, and these emotional problems are now more common in teens than heart disease and diabetes. Also, technology emits harmful radiation that is home to a plethora of health complications in children and teens. Dr. Kardaras writes, "But we are discovering that the electromagnetic fields (EMFs) emitted by screens and cell phones are a bit different from others—and more dangerous" (128). He elaborates on that by stating, "A 2011 study conducted by researchers at the National Institutes of Health showed that it only took 50 minutes of cell phone radiation to 'increase activity' in brain cells; 'increase activity' is a nice, academic way to say 'cook'" (Kardaras 129). It only takes fifty minutes of using a cell



phone for there to be consequences. With almost every child having their own cell phone now, this exposure to radiation poses some serious health issues. Regarding this cell phone radiation, Dr. Black, chairman of neurology at a medical center in L.A., says, "In addition to leading to a development of cancer and tumors, there could be a whole host of other effects like cognitive memory function, since the memory temporal lobes are where we hold our cell phones" (qtd. in Kardaras 129). That's right, radiation from a cell phone can cause cancer and tumors in the general

area of the brain, since people usually have their cell phones near their heads and faces.

There is also research being done on other possible effects of cell phone radiation, like cognitive memory function. This is something parents need to take into consideration before handing over smartphones and other electronics to their kids.

Finally, there are countless stories of children and teens who've been culprit to video game-influenced violence. For example, there is one story in

Glow Kids about a fifteen-year-old boy, Devin, who was addicted to the popular video game, Grand Theft Auto. He was

taken to the police station after being found in a stolen vehicle. When told by an officer that he might have to spend a few years in jail if he was found guilty of grand theft auto, he went ballistic (Kardaras 165). The scene that unfolded is told in detail:

He [Devin] lunged at the officer, grabbed Strickland's [the officer] .40 caliber Glock and shot him twice, once fatally in the head. Hearing the commotion, Officer James Crump, who had been in another part of the station house, started running toward the gunfire. He

was met by Devin in the hallway and was shot three times, also once fatally in the head.

Devin kept walking down the hallway, toward the door of the emergency dispatcher. There, he fired five shots into dispatcher Ace Mealer, killing him as well. Devin then grabbed a set of car keys and sped away in a police cruiser.

Three officers were dead. It all took less than a minute. Devin was captured several hours later ... where he told his arresting officers: 'Life is a video game. Everybody's got to die sometime.' During his trial for capital murder, his attorney argued that ... the repeated playing of Grand Theft Auto caused him to dissociate from reality when stressed. His attorney discovered that Devin had played Grand Theft Auto for hundreds of hours and, shockingly, that there is a vivid depiction in the game of a player doing exactly what Devin did: escaping a police station by shooting officers and fleeing in a squad car. (Kardaras 165, 166)

This rash act of violence resulted in three lives being lost. Devin's actions were induced by his video game addiction. He recreated the exact same police station scene that occurred in the video game, only this time it was real life. He killed real people, and the damage was permanent. Perhaps he thought he was just in another video game, or perhaps not. Nevertheless, one thing is obvious: his outbreak of violence was, indeed, caused by his severe video game addiction. This is only one of many stories retold in Glow Kids of child and teen violence influenced by video games and other technologies. One chapter is solely dedicated to recounting stories of children who fell prey to video game-influenced violence. Teens, and even children as young as eight, shooting their parents, other family members, or themselves when their favorite violent video game was taken away (Kardaras 161-171). While not every technology addiction is this extreme, it's important for parents to understand that there are severe cases, like Devin, who do reach extremes like murder or suicide.

The range of issues when it comes to technology



addiction in young children, older children, and teens is nearly limitless. From behavioral issues (like tantrums and violent outbreaks) to health issues (like cancer and motor skills) to emotional issues (like depression and loneliness), an addiction to technology comes with it all. In an age when technology is only going to progress more and more, it can be hard for parents to stay in control of the amount of technology their children have access to. Dr. Kardaras recommends that parents start staying in control of technology from an early age, only allowing up to an hour of screen time a day. Also, he tells parents to opt their kids out of using technology at school, since they spend most of their day in school. And, if their children still end up with an addiction, he states that all technology needs to be removed immediately. But, their technology needs to be replaced with other things like a new (or old) hobby, a family trip, and more personal, real-life relationships (244, 245). I'm sure no parent wants his or her child to reach the point that little William or violent Devin did, so they need to be aware that technology addiction is a real and dangerous problem that is far too common.

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Every 15 Minutes

by Daksha Prasad

Every 15 minutes, someone is seriously injured or killed in a drunk driving accident. November of senior year, I was in second period completing the usual class routine when a hall pass to the assistant principal's office was silently placed on my desk. I remember feeling as if the walk up to the office took years. I kept reviewing everything I could possibly be in trouble for. Why else would I be called to the office, if not for the fact I was in trouble? When I entered the assistant principal's office, I found myself with three unfamiliar students. "How many of you know of E-15, or Every 15 Minutes?" I shyly raised my hand and said, "It's a drunk driving awareness program, right?" With a nod, he asked if we would like to participate for our school, and I accepted instantly.

The entire event was kept a secret from the rest of the students and staff of McNair. E-15 was to take place on the 5th and 6th of April, but preparation had started immediately. Our jobs were to be the actors of a staged drunk driving crash that would be set up in front of our school for the student body to observe. All of the students participating had their deaths faked whether they were in the crash, or watching as one of the "lost souls." We would disappear from school on the 5th, and we wouldn't return home. We wouldn't have any communication with anyone outside of the E-15 participants. It was set up to simulate that we had really disappeared from the world.

The twenty-three E-15 members arrived to school an hour early the morning of the 5th. The only rehearsal we received was assurance that everyone knew their roles, and a simple "Act to get your feelings and message out to your peers." As soon as everyone's makeup was done--fake

blood, wounds, and all--we were escorted out to the crash scene, which was covered by a black tarp fluttering in the cold, spring morning breeze. My heart was pounding as I shakily climbed in the back seat of my assigned car, thinking, "This could really be me." Everyone took their places. The student body arrived, and the tarps were ripped off our cars. It was time for McNair's Every 15 Minutes.

Sirens wailed in the distance as one of my peers made the 911 call. The rest of my group in the crash started sobbing and screaming, asking each other if they were okay before running over to the other car. As they ran, screaming blame at the ones in the other car, they were horrified to discover a victim that had ejected onto the hood of the other car. Instant death. The situation became even worse as they finally discovered me in the back seat, and I couldn't get out. My legs were paralyzed, and my abdomen had a severe gash across it. My mind blanked, tuning out the screams and sobs around me, as I started crying helplessly in the back seat covered in blood. Before I knew it, glass shattered above me and equipment revved alive

My heart was pounding as I shakily climbed in the back seat of my assigned car, thinking, "This could really be me."

as firefighters cut the roof and door off the car to transfer me onto a gurney. Shortly after, I was experiencing my first helicopter flight... and it was to the hospital in an attempt to save my life. Nurses and doctors shuffled around me as

I felt repeated rhythmic pressure on my chest and heard the steadily slowing beeps of my heart monitor, which, after some time, ceased. I remember the cracks and gasps of my mother's broken wailing over my "dead body" as she shakily stroked my hair back from my closed eyes.

Afterwards, when the entire team left for our hotel retreat, I had a chance to reflect about the experience with the others. I remember shivering due to the phantom chill of blood running down my face and stomach, and my voice cracked with my input. The one thing we all agreed on: it was a traumatizing experience none of us wanted to actually truly experience in life. Even though it was a staged accident, there was a lasting effect on all of us. We'd heard stories about drunk driving accidents, seen pictures of the aftermath, and been warned of the consequences... but nothing compared to experiencing it firsthand... Yet, the experience wasn't over.

The next day, we returned to school and attended our "funerals" with the rest of the student body in the gym. We watched our drunk driver, our murderer, receive his sentence and be taken away. Nothing can ever compare to the warmth I received when I returned to my loved ones that day. The warm, boa-like constricting hugs, the relieved "I missed yous" and "I love yous," and the pain-laced "Why would you make me go through that?" made me realize everything I could've lost in a split second. I didn't notice my own worth, how much I had, or how many people cared about me, until I disappeared "permanently."

Most importantly, my loved ones and E-15 made me realize that I never want to put myself in the position where I can lose everything, where I can hurt someone, and where I can hurt my loved ones. I never want to be the cause of someone's pain when it could've easily been avoided, especially when there is nothing that can ever be done to make it right. Today, I make an extra effort to stop those around me from drinking and driving. I used to trust their judgement if they said they felt okay to drive. Now, if they've had as much of a drop of alcohol, they can't drive. I never want to be put in the situation that I experienced,

and I'll do everything in my power to prevent the people around me from experiencing it too. I want to spread the impact E-15 had on me with others, so that tragedy can be avoided as much as possible.



Dystopia Comes in Threes

Janine Teixeira

Political parties have slogans they are known for. These provide the public with an idea of what they stand for and serve as an efficient way to recognize the parties. However, in the book *1984*, written by George Orwell, there is only one party. The Party created three slogans for which they- and all the citizens in Oceania- must live by. War is peace, freedom is slavery, and ignorance is strength. These slogans contain obvious contradictions at first glance, but when their meanings are dissected, they begin to make sense.

Throughout this novel, there are several times when the war between Oceania and Eastasia/Eurasia is pivotal to the plot. Winston remembers when his country was not always at war with one of them, and this puts him in danger. War and peace are antonyms, but on a certain scale, they are indeed the same. Because Oceania is always at war, it draws its citizens together through the common cause. The Party instills in its people time and time again that either Eastasia or Eurasia is the largest threat facing them, and only devoted loyalty to Big Brother can protect them. During the Two Minutes Hate, "...the figure of a Eurasian soldier who seemed to be advancing, huge and terrible, his submachine gun roaring and seeming to spring out of the surface of the screen, so that some of the people in the front row actually flinched backwards..." (Orwell 15). People are required to partake in the Two Minutes Hate every day to express their hatred and fear of whoever they are at war with, and Goldstein. The constant war unites the people of Oceania with these elements, and therefore draws eyes

away from The Party's methods. Additionally, many times in this book, the proles are mentioned as being the only ones who can ever revolt against

The Party- even though it will never happen. Orwell describes a scene where Winston is in the slums, witnesses a bombing, and thinks, "...the proles were nearly always right when they gave you a warning of this kind" (84). They warned Winston that a rocket was coming, and he heeded their advice. These occurrences happen often in the slums, and they are passed off as a bombing from Eastasia or Eurasia. The truth, however, is that the rockets are gifts from The Party themselves. It is their way of ensuring that the proles never become strong enough to rise up if they wanted to. The Party has created this invisible, enormous enemy just to keep their own people distracted and subdued. By creating a war, their country has reached peace within itself. Furthermore, because The Party weaves false information into its citizens' minds, the people never realize that the real enemy may be their own government. During Hate Week, mayhem ensues when the country Oceania is at war with is suddenly changed, and "The banners and posters with which the square was





decorated were all wrong! Quite half of them had the wrong faces on them. It was sabotage! The agents of Goldstein had been at work!"

(Orwell 181). When

the people discover the

facts they know are wrong, they immediately blame the Brotherhood for it. They do not think to pin the incident on their own government, because they do not know how to. The only enemy they have ever known is the Brotherhood and Eastasia or Eurasia, ergo they will never turn on The Party because it would destroy the inner peace they have reached within their own existence.

Oceania's citizens cannot think for themselves, which means they have no freedom. If some try to, they are labeled as thought-criminals and are vaporized. This removes any opportunity of rebellion without the people even realizing what is happening. The party has tricked the people into thinking that life is better when they simply stay loyal to The Party- which can arguably be true. When one is not free, they do not have to think for themselves, which saves them from pain and suffering. Winston wrote in a diary in the beginning of the novel and immediately knew "The Thought Police would get him just the same... he had committed [thoughtcrime]" (Orwell 19). Winston's mind was free, and he was doomed. His freedom had put a target on his head, and he knew it would only be a matter of time until he was caught. The other citizens, however, lived as slaves. Whatever The Party told them to think or to not think, do or not do, they followed suit. Orwell explains, "The horrible thing about the Two Minutes Hate was not that one was obliged to act a part, but that it was impossible to avoid joining in" (14). Even Winston, who has a mind of his own, impulsively swells with hatred and lashes out.

He starts to get mad at The Party, but it is safe to assume that everyone else indeed becomes irate at Goldstein. Their minds have become accustomed to the idea that it is safer to not have their own thoughts, than to think individually. Therefore, the proles are a danger to The Party. They do not believe that freedom is slavery; they instead believe that freedom is freedom. Winton writes, "If there is hope, it lies in the proles" (Orwell 69). The proles know that, to be free, one needs freedom. The other citizens believe that they are free because The Party tells them they are. In a way, they are slaves that are free to exist. The people are aware that being slaves to The Party leads to a better life, because it saves them from the challenges and indecisiveness that freedom inflicts upon people. The last scene in the book highlights this very important point. It states, "But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother" (Orwell 298). The struggle named

War and peace are antonyms, but on a certain scale, they are indeed the same. Because Oceania is always at war, it draws its citizens together through the common cause.

here was what Winston had been dealing with for years. He knew The Party was corrupt, and he suffered because of it. In Christine Rosen's article of literary criticism, she asserts, "Like Winston Smith in 1984, they believe that they are brave individuals daring to protest what others meekly accept, when in reality they are simply aggrieved" (par 6). Winston was struggling with the knowledge he had, and in the end, there was nothing he could do with it. He wanted to change things, but he could not- which only increased his suffering due to his free thoughts. He could not be the mindless slave The Party needed him to be, so they tortured him relentlessly. When Winston was finally able

to think like a proper Party member, he was free. He won. Only when he lost all individual thought and action, was he considered free. Maybe not free in the original sense of the word, but he was free from pain and suffering, which is blissful when one has lived so long with it.

There are some people in this novel who had thoughts of their own, and whether these thoughts were conscious or not, they were threats to The Party. The Party only succeeded because- for the most part- the people they were governing were ignorant. Ignorance and strength work together in Oceania because, as long as the people are ignorant, The Party is strong. The people in most danger in this novel are the intelligent ones, because they are most dangerous to The Party. While Syme is discussing Newspeak with Winston, Winston thinks, "Unquestionably Syme will be vaporized" (Orwell 45) and he elaborates with, "There was something that he lacked: discretion, aloofness, a sort of saving stupidity" (55). Because Syme is smart and voices his thoughts and opinions enough, he will become a nonperson. If an intelligent person exists, The Party will not be as strong as it could be. Smart people are a threat because they could form thoughts against The Party and those thoughts could turn into actions. And that person would be smart enough to figure out a way to get followers and take The Party down. The people of Oceania need to adopt an empty mind to be seen as innocuous. The morning after Syme goes missing, "...a few thoughtless people commented on his absence. On the next day nobody mentioned him" (Orwell 147). It is when people do not keep silent and begin questioning things, when they are watched even closer. The Party will not tolerate people who think for themselves, because it is a threat to what they stand for. The Party only trusts this knowledge with those who will not remember to know it. O'Brien confides in Winston and says, "We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power" (Orwell 263). Oceania does not care about the state of its citizens as long as they are ignorant. They do not care about their happiness; The Party only wants the people to not interrupt

the reign of power they have no intention of losing.

The three slogans of The Party were never meant to stand for something the people would want. They incorporated some soothing and positive words such as peace, freedom, and strength, but the citizens of Oceania never knew that these words would not be applied to them. They were being deceived from day one, but The Party ensured that they would never let the people realize that. As time passes, the connections between the novel 1984 and our own world cannot be ignored. Examining these party slogans helps us reevaluate the world we live in, and what it is becoming. They are subtle connections, but nevertheless, they exist, and they are alarming. This book is meant to be a dystopian novel, not a threat. But here we are, heeding the warnings nonetheless.

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Family Over Everything?

by Meena Naderi

Now that I have finally flipped the page on an everlasting bad time in my life, I can finally say growing up was tough for me. Growing up for me consisted of being punished all the time. I don't feel as though I liked getting in trouble, I would say, because I was raised by such strict parents. It almost made me want to be more rebellious. I was always the black sheep in the family who didn't agree with or follow our culture. I was also the only one in my whole family who was born in the states, and I feel like that made a huge difference in who I am today compared to my family who were all not born in the states. But telling my parents I was expecting at the age of seventeen had to be the most uncomfortable process I've ever been through.

At the time, I was a senior and lived at my parents' house. My parents were both very religious and were also stuck in their old, cultural ways. Meanwhile, I was the complete opposite. I enjoyed being away from home and my family because I felt like I could be myself. Having an opposite gender friend was forbidden, let alone having a boyfriend. Then, there came a time when I didn't want to keep having a boyfriend a secret anymore. I hated lying to my parents about who I was really hanging out with. I also hated having to lie to my boyfriend about why he couldn't meet my parents. I finally gained the courage to introduce my boyfriend, Ricardo, at my graduation. Once I did that, my family left me standing there without saying a word.

Immediately after that embarrassing moment, I slowly started becoming more distant with my family. As

soon as I became distant, my mother became suspicious of me being pregnant because I became really sick. The tension was becoming too much for me at home; I felt like I was being shamed every other hour. Once I realized I couldn't take it, I moved out of my parents' house and into my boyfriend's house. My parents knew I wasn't like them and the rest of the family growing up, so moving out of their house wasn't a big shock to them. I felt really alone and went through depression during my pregnancy because I didn't have much of a support system.

My parents didn't try to reach out to me for a while after I had left. But then came a day when they remembered that I existed and decided to show up at my boyfriend's home. I was confused, and although a part of me was feeling happy to see them, they brought back a lot of anger. My anger came from wanting to be accepted for who I am, and for being punished for bringing life into this world. Although I was already showing, immediately I sat them down and told them I was having my baby whether they liked it or not. They were not happy about it all; they assumed that because I was having a child I was not going to continue my education. I feel like my mother thought my life was going to turn out like hers because she had a child at the age of fifteen and had to put her life on pause. But I knew I wanted to become somebody and be the best I could be.

Now that my child is here, happy, and healthy, they have tried to build a relationship with her. But the damage

has already been done. The idea of my parents and my daughter having a relationship has been dead since they even had a chance to build one. I refuse to allow anybody who doesn't see how special my little girl is around her. I don't associate with them and neither will my daughter. So I guess they got what they always wanted. This whole situation used to make me upset because I want my daughter to know where I came from. Subsequently, I feel as though I saved her from negativity. I had envisioned having my daughter raised in a healthy household surrounded by people that love and cherish her.



I was always the black sheep in the family who didn't agree with or follow our culture.

Although I had to learn the hard way, I'm glad I know now that just because they're family, it doesn't mean they have good intentions for me. Everything happens for a reason, and even though this is a very unfortunate situation, I'm glad it happened. I had to learn one way or another who's really on my side and will continue to be with me no matter the situation. Nevertheless, I'm glad it's all over, and my little family and I are intact and happy as ever.



Confusion

by Goldnazsadat Abrishami Osgoui

Andrew X. Pham a successful American Vietnamese engineer, several years after his immigration, confronts a cliché question, “Who am I?” Looking for his true identity, Pham starts a journey. He rides a bicycle from his homeland, San Francisco, to his motherland, Vietnam. Through the journey, flashbacks of his memories run in his mind. Andrew published his journey’s diary named *Catfish and Mandala*. The book is a story of sacrifice and immigration. Andrew is a victim of racial stereotypes, blind spots, and rejections; these stereotypes and biases lead him to an identity crisis.

First of all, Andrew is a victim of contradictions which come from a gap between Andrew’s blind spots and realities. Andrew is blind to an Immigrant-Vietnamese’s life in his/her motherland, Vietnam. Andrew is a victim because he does not choose to be blind to realities. In fact, realities are not in his sight of view, so his brain illustrates an unreal ideal picture. Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald, in their book *Blind Spot*, describe that every human being’s brain has blind spots, so their minds use a mechanism in order to survive, mindbug. According to Banaji and Greenwald, mindbugs are “ingrained habits of thought that lead to errors in how we perceive, remember, reason, and make decisions” (4). Andrew’s mindbug tricks him about Vietnam. For example, he just remembers the beautiful memories of Vietnam and forgets the ugly face of Vietnam. In the first years of the Pham family’s immigration to the USA, they notice the differences between USA and Vietnam. For example, when Andrew’s mother tries to cook a turkey which she has mistaken for a chicken, she says “everything in America is big” (Pham 166). It means she notices the size difference between American things and Vietnamese things.

However, when Andrew goes to Vietnam he is surprised by the small size of Vietnamese things. He wonders “... why Vietnamese prefer kindergarten furniture” (Pham 173). However, Vietnam, which he spent his childhood in, also does not look like the USA at all, but Andrew’s mindbug impacts Andrew’s memory about Vietnam. Likewise, Andrew’s disappointment about Vietnam’s poverty comes from his mindbug. Andrew himself, beneath his beautiful childhood memories in his Grandmother’s home, points out that “I could tell people were hungry because I often watched the store for Grandma” (Pham 53). However, when he travels to Vietnam, he is upset when he sees how Vietnam is poor and how life is hard in Vietnam. So, in Vietnam, he whispers “Where is this place I’m seeking for? There is only ash” (Pham 183). In fact, he does not see anything familiar to his memory. He cannot see his childhood Vietnam. Andrew’s mindbug leads him to be upset.

Andrew is a victim of racial stereotypes, blind spots, and rejections; these stereotypes and biases lead him to an identity crisis.

Likewise, Andrew is a victim of rejection. Andrew rejects the stereotypes, which are related to a Vietnamese-American in America. For example, when people mock his Asian appearance, he consoles himself that some “people throw trash because I’m a bicyclist and not because of the slant of my eyes” (Pham 38). In fact, he tries to put that stereotypes into shadow. However, as Claude M. Steele

in his book named *Whistling Vivaldi* describes, ignoring stereotypes “is costly, to our own personal success and development, to the quality of life in an identity-diverse society and world...” (4). When Andrew ignores that negative stereotype, he has to pay for his ignorance. The cost of Andrew’s rejection is his identity crisis which refers to the lack of the well-developed personality. If he had a developed personality, he would not miss his true self.

Nonetheless, Andrew is used to ignorance instead of acceptance. He tries to ignore the American face of his American-Vietnamese identity. Andrew, forgetting his American attitudes, wants to feel like his childhood in Vietnam. While he deeply feels he belongs to a place where he does not “talk to an Asian person in weeks,” he takes a voyage to Vietnam to find his true self in Vietnam, where he does not belong to anymore (Pham 40). Mindbugs “can give us both false feeling of faith in people we perhaps should not trust and the opposite” (Banaji and Greenwald 16). In Andrew’s case, while Andrew feels more comfortable between American, his mindbug makes him see all Vietnamese as more trustworthy. Andrew rides a bicycle to Vietnam to rest his mind beyond his Vietnamese ethnicity and solve his identity confusion.

However, Andrew knows that a Vietnamese who migrates from Vietnam is not a Vietnamese anymore; he/she is called Viet Kieu. A Viet Kieu’s attitude and manner are not the same as a Vietnamese. On the other hand, Andrew unconsciously lies to himself that he rides to

Vietnam to find his roots. The truth is he unintentionally tries to prove to himself that his roots have grown now and settled in the USA. He wants to emphasize the cultural differences between himself and a Vietnamese and shows to himself that he is not a Vietnamese anymore. He rides to Vietnam to prove his American identity rather than his Vietnamese identity. Even though he says that he rides a bicycle to Vietnam because “It is so American,” he is not aware of his true purpose of going to Vietnam (Pham 27).

As a result, he gets upset when he arrives in East Asia.

Banaji and Greenwald call “The things that people keep from themselves” the colorless lies, “because they are invisible to the teller of the lie” (24). In fact, Andrew tells a colorless lie for the reason of his trip because the main reason for his trip is not visible to himself.

The cost of Andrew’s colorless lie is disappointment. Andrew is amazed when he realizes that the Vietnamese do not see him as one of them. Vietnamese trail him, smiling, waving, and yelling, “Westerner, westerner” (Pham

186). Andrew feels many negative stereotypes

related to his Viet Kieu identity. Steele uses the term of “Stereotype Threat” for the unpleasant situation which a person feels the risk of accepting negative stereotypes related to his/her identity. He adds people “... understand that one false move could cause them to reduce to that stereotype,” so they try hard to avoid that stereotype (Steele 7). In fact, Andrew’s trip is full of stereotype threats which make him feel awkward in Vietnam. Thus, Andrew tries hard to not be seen as an example of the negative stereotype





related to Viet Kieus. For example, one of the widely perpetuated stereotypes among Vietnamese is that Viet Kieus see themselves better than Vietnamese (Pham 147). In order to not to be considered as an arrogant Viet Kieu,

Andrew forces himself to do whatever seemed unpleasant to him. For instance, through his hitchhike toward Hanoi, the cargo passengers finally trust him and invite him to have a dinner with them. Andrew explains “in a gesture of hospitality and friendship, people within reach start putting morsels of food into my bowl” (Pham 209). At his first try, he finds the meal disgusting because “someone hadn’t bothered to shave the pig before butchering it” (Pham 210). However, while Andrew feels that he bites a live pig, because of the stereotype threat, he cannot directly avoid eating it. In fact, he avoids it to be seen as an arrogant Viet Kieu.

Moreover, Vietnamese see a Viet Kieu as a winner of a lottery. Vietnamese women ask Andrew to marry them and take them to America, or they say “Here’s my photo, find me an American husband” (Pham 101). Vietnamese men want money from him because they believe Viet Kieus are rich. Andrew feels uncomfortable when Vietnamese try to accompany him because they know Andrew is a US Citizen. However, Andrew himself and his family also have had several perceptions and biases through white Westerners since they live in Vietnam. Banaji and Greenwald, with their experts prove that almost everyone is biased, but because people are blind to their own biases, those biases are hidden to them. In fact, Andrew, like the Vietnamese, carries hidden biases to Americans, but because he is blind to his biases, he’s shocked by Vietnamese’ reactions. In fact, the Pham family, like other Vietnamese, believe that

white-skinned westerners are better than themselves. For example, when the Pham family live in Vietnam, Andrew’s mother does not let her children “play in the sun in the middle of the day” because the sun burns their skin, and make them as dark-skinned boys. In fact, she believes it’s better for her children to have light skin like Westerners. As well, Andrew’s “parents put aside a small fortune to enroll” little Andrew in a “private French institution for boys” because they believe that a French institute is better than a Vietnamese one (Pham 96). In fact, the Pham family believe in order to be successful, they should get close to Westerners. However, Andrew underperforms in the private French institute. In fact, he believes that he does not belong in his school (Pham 96). Even though Andrew’s parents have never noticed Andrew’s problem, students’ underperformance because of stereotype threat is a natural behavior. Steele researches on African American students’ underperformance in American schools, and proves that stereotype threat makes black students do worse than other students in the schools. Steele explains black students believe that they do not belong in their school so they underperform. In fact, in Vietnam, Andrew also is a victim of stereotype threat.

Back to Andrew’s biases, in America, Andrew avoids anything related to the Vietnamese culture because of the stereotype threat related to an American-Vietnamese. The truth is, most of the immigrants avoid their cultural-racial identity after immigrating to the USA, especially if their Motherland has a political problem with their homeland. Persis M. Karim, in her research-article named Charting the Past and Present: Iranian Immigrant and Ethnic Experience through Poetry, gives several poems from Iranian-American who confront with the immigration problems. One of them is from Laleh Khalili named In Exile. She, under the pressure of the negative stereotypes related to her Iranian Identity, denies her identity. Khalili refers herself as “Azizam” which means “my dear” in Persian and feels shameful both because of being an Iranian, whose government has a problematic relationship with American government, and because of

denying her “connection to the land, culture, and complex history of Iran” (116). She describes her identity rejection process below:

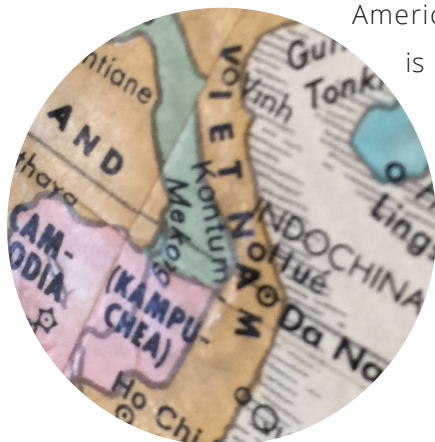
“Azizam, shamefaced I am, just shamefaced. The other day, you know, I denied being yours
I denied being you I denied it all the other day,
I had to learn to unlearn you the other day Azizam,
how does one recount a story
in a language, no one seems to understand?” (116).

In fact, the stereotypes which show an immigrant as a foreigner or enemy in his homeland leads him/her to identity-rejection. They are the stereotypes that make Andrew and his brothers playing in a public beach feel like they “are playing in someone else backyard” (Pham 194). In fact, Andrew is terrified to be seen as un-American.

Andrew is amazed when he realizes that the Vietnamese do not see him as one of them.

Andrew's fear results in his negative stereotype toward his own identity. Banaji and Greenwald call it as Self-Defeating Stereotype and explains that “often people show evidence of automatic negative stereotypes about their own group” (111). For example, Andrew hates whatever makes a man a Vietnamese, “slightly measuring eyes. The quick gestures of humor, bobbing of heads, forever congenial, eager to please” (Pham 25). Also, he sees Kay as the final hope of his dysfunctional Vietnamese-American family because she is not like them. She “looked like an American” (Pham 26). In fact, Andrew has the self-defeating stereotype.

The interesting point about Andrew is only his American-Vietnamese identity is significant for him while he has several other identities. For example, he is an engineer, a Californian, and a sociable person, too. Steele calls



“conditions [one has] to deal with in a setting in order to function in it” as the contingencies (68). He adds “the kind of contingency most likely to press an identity on [one] is a threatening one, the threat of something bad happening to [one] because [one has] the identity” (75). So, Andrew's Vietnamese-American Identity is significant for him because he sees his Vietnamese-American identity under attack. For example, because he is Vietnamese-American, his young American classmates shouts to him “Go home, chinks” (Pham 190). Even though Andrew sees himself part of America, his classmates do not accept him as part of their group. As well, the image of his trip to Arizona accompanied with a “one finger salute: “Go home” shouted from a pickup driver toward Andrew and his brother stays in depth of Andrew's memory (Pham 39). His Vietnamese-American identity is bombarded, inside and outside home. In the home, Andrew's father always remarks that “Never Forget that we are different” from Americans we have to work harder (Pham 191).

He teaches Andrew to say “[Thanks], sir” not because being polite is an etiquette for man, but because a Vietnamese is lower than others so he has to be polite. As well outside the home, Andrew grows up “fighting blacks, whites, and Chicanos” because “everybody beat up chinaman whether or not he was really an ethnic Chinese” (Pham 328). In fact, Andrew feels uncomfortable because of his American-Vietnamese identity, which forces him to be politer and work harder than others.

In the end, Andrew, who escapes his motherland for a better life in America and runs away from America for finding his true self, finishes his journey with overcoming his identity crisis. His flashbacks, and his observations of Vietnam and the Vietnamese help him find the answer of his “who am I?” question. In fact, when his blind spots are revealed to him, he understands which identity group he truly belongs. He is not a victim anymore. He gives up proving himself beyond negative stereotypes and stops rejecting his identity. He knows that he is an American-Vietnamese, and his home is in California.

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HashTag Filter

by Jesus Cano

Prior to 1999 the thought of a cellphone being capable of surfing the web was only an idea of future technology. Now having a cellphone unable to surf the web is comparable to a horrible nightmare. Mobile devices have expanded their functionalities since their launch of internet access in 1999 (15 Fantastic First On The Internet), and they are now capable of running apps allowing us to be connected whenever and wherever we go. But having access to the immense world of the web at our finger tips has proven unbeneficial to our cultural growth. With easy handheld access to media and its many platforms, we as Americans have become more interested in our mobile device than having a chance to participate in social interactions. Our reactions to fake news are met with uncertainty towards our safety. Being exposed to the infinite number of videos with violent content has cost us to lose empathy for others. With virtually limitless access to media and its many platforms, we are beginning to see the world through a filter-a filter that is changing our perception of the world, causing us to be less social, to feel unsafe, and worst, to lose empathy for others.



In the summer 18 years ago, in the year 2000, while my sister and I sat in the living room watching T.V. I can recall my mother yelling from the kitchen, “Turn off that

T.V. it is time to eat!”, my sister and I glued to the screen would look away for enough time to state our case, “But mom, this is a new episode”. As you can imagine that argument never worked. My mother had made a no T.V. during dinner a rule and she was very strict about it. I soon figured out my mother enforced this rule to benefit my sister and me. While we sat around the table, nothing could distract us from the meaningful and important conversations that emerged from the family dinner table. Of course, back in 2000 mobile devices were not as advanced as they are now, nor as accessible.

Fast forward 8 years to 2008, and even with the T.V. off family dinners were not family dinners at all. There were a lot of moments where my sister and I found ourselves asking our mother, “Mom, did you even hear what I just said?” With my mother’s Facebook profile up and running, scrolling through her Facebook feed was more entertaining than a conversation amongst the family. All the conversation we could have had were impeded by the use of a mobile device. The rather sad experience I had with my mother was the first piece of the filter. This piece changed the way I socialized with my family and more commonly how I didn’t. Being able to hold a conversation with a person whose focus is only on a screen inside their hand has become tremendously difficult. Everyone can agree that at one point or another we have fallen victims of the pseudo-listening epidemic that we are living in today. Pseudo-listening or in simple terms to pretend to listen has found its way into the conversations we have with close friends and more impactful our interactions with our families. Conversations with family and friends should be deep and meaningful. But now even a simple conversation has become increasingly impossible

due to the use of mobile devices, and the need to be online and connected. This effect can be seen in many, if not all, of our social groups. In Dado Ruvic's article, "Is Facebook Making Us Lonely", Ruvic states our social connections are few and are growing less meaningful, "Loneliness and being alone are not the same thing, but both are on the rise. We meet fewer people. We gather less. And when we gather our bonds are less meaningful and less easy" (Ruvic 3). Less easy? Try extremely difficult. At home, at work, even at school the process of starting a conversation is unsettling, no one wants to start a conversation that will inevitably be interrupted by a chime or buzz in our pockets.

From 2008 to 2014, thanks to the unpleasant feeling of speaking to someone who is not listening, I promised

With virtually limitless access to media and its many platforms, we are beginning to see the world through a filter—a filter that is changing our perception of the world, causing us to be less social, to feel unsafe, and worst, to lose empathy for others.

myself I would try my best to put down my mobile device and not become a pseudo-listener. I am happy to say I did a pretty good job keeping that promise. But I had not prepared for the surprise the media had in store for me. On the 14th of October of the year 2014, while I rested after a long day at work I decided to pick up my mobile device and take a look at my Facebook feed, maybe someone had posted something funny. After scrolling through countless pictures, videos, and ads, I stumbled upon a post from a close friend, he had reposted an article from the National Report. The heading read "Texas Town Quarantined After Family of Five Test Positive for The Ebola Virus". I was well aware of the Ebola crisis going on in Africa during the time,

I also knew that a good number of Americans were in Africa volunteering in aiding the ill. Interested in what the article had to say, I clicked on the post. As I read the article an unsettling fear crept up my body.

Could an epidemic happen here in America? Can it reach me here in California? I started asking myself these questions, fearful of the answers. This became the second piece to my filter; this piece changed the way I carried myself. I did not feel safe, I did not think the disease could be quarantined. I carried that fear with me everywhere I went. I was afraid I would end up reading an article stating that Sacramento international airport was shut down due to an Ebola outbreak. I know my story may sound a bit pathetic and a tad naive but reactions to fake news are not always as harmless as mine. In Nsikan Akpan's article "The very real consequences of fake news stories and why your brain can't ignore them", Akpan reminds us of the 28-year-old man who did not deal with fake news very well, "On Sunday afternoon, a 28-year-old man walked into a Washington, D.C. ping-pong bar and pizzeria. He was carrying an AR-15 assault rifle . . . Edgar Maddison Welch told police he had traveled . . . to the nation's capital to investigate a pre-election conspiracy theory" (Akpan 1). Fake news and its easy access create a filter weakening our sense of security. Whether you are afraid of an epidemic rampaging through your state or afraid of an unbalanced man shooting up your pizzeria, the lack of safety and the fear caused by fake news is very real.

A string of violent content is flooding our walls: heads being decapitated, body's being mutilated, and people being shot to death. Violent videos have caused Americans to be less empathetic. In her article "Empathy: College students don't have as much as they used to" Ann



Arbor quotes Konrath saying, "The increase in exposure to media during this time period could be one factor, . . . exposure to violent media numbs people to the pain of others" (Arbor). Scrolling through violent content has become a favorite past time of my brother and many of my friends. Since 2014 till now in 2018, whenever my brother and I hang out it has become a custom for him to show me his latest findings of violent media. At the beginning of the year –2018– my brother shared a video with me. His reaction to the video showed me just how desensitized he really was. With a I wouldn't hurt a fly expression on his face my brother asks me "Would you like to see a cool video I found?", interested in what he had to show me I answered, "Okay, as long as it's not another decapitation video." Without saying another word my brother pressed play. The video started with four male teens each one was holding a gun. The teens were walking close behind a man who seemed unaware he was being followed. As the four drew closer to the man, one of the teens pointed and shot the man in the back of the head. The man now lying there lifeless was not enough for the four teens, they each began to shoot and empty clips on the already deceased man. I could not bring myself to finish the video. Shaken from what I had just seen I asked my brother how he was able to watch videos with that degree of violence. He laughed and mocked me for being too empathetic. I don't know when violent media first came to be, but I do know I hate stumbling upon videos like the one my brother shared with me. Violent videos like the one my brother shared with me and some much worse, are easily viewable by many people especially with a mobile device. The lack of empathy in America can be blamed on our mobile devices and the easy access to violent media our devices provide.

Thanks to the introduction of the internet to our mobile devices we are seeing the world through filters. These filters are changing and distorting our thoughts, emotions and communication. But instead of finding ways to be less attached to our mobile devices, new apps are created everyday adding to the problem. Sadly, I don't have

solutions to fix these complex problems. If something does not change I do believe we will continue to be less social, continue to feel unsafe, and continue to lack empathy for others.

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The Art of Truth

by Martha Magana

At one point or another, mostly everyone has heard the cliché that “the truth shall set you free.” What about the people who deny the truth? Will their truth escape no matter how hard they try to keep it locked away and hidden? Well, Elizabeth Bishop’s poem “One Art” has the speaker’s truth do exactly that: break free. Despite the speaker’s attempt to convince the readers that losing is an art that is easy to master and does not bring disaster, her denial falls apart. With Bishop’s utilization of hyperbole, untraditional form, and interruption, such a message is conveyed, that self-deception is futile against the truth. For the speaker, the truth about loss actually being a disaster is unveiled.

Exaggeration is found in Bishop’s poem “One Art” to show that truth is superior to denial. Usually, hyperboles are used to emphasize the writer’s point, their message; however, in this case, it reveals the speaker’s overcompensation. They claim to have lost “some realms [they have] owned, two rivers, [and] a continent” (14). The overstatement of losing something as massive as a continent serves the purpose of the speaker trying so hard to convince the readers, and inevitably themselves, that losing is easy to master. If they can lose a continent, then losing anything else should be just as easy or even easier. How hard can it be to lose something as small as keys if it is easy to lose a large land mass? The speaker is overdoing what people can lose and how effortless it all is in hopes that she might end up believing it too.

It is not just hyperbolic statements that reveal the speaker’s self-deception; it is also the fact that she’s writing “One Art” in the first place. Most people write things down for a better chance of remembering it. Likewise, the speaker

could be writing this poem so that she can remember the message she is trying to project to the readers. Although she might be trying to convince her readers of the truthiness behind her false words, she is also manipulating herself into believing said words. A common study trick students might do is to rewrite their notes or key points of a topic multiple times to try to retain the information. Therefore, it should be no surprise that “One Art” is written in a villanelle, a poem whose one main component is repeating two lines throughout the poem. For this poem, these two lines are “[t]he art of losing isn’t hard to master” and “their loss is no disaster” even though the latter varies throughout the poem (1-3). By choosing those two lines as her repeating ones, it seems as if she thinks that writing them down a myriad of times suddenly makes them true, that she can deceive herself into believing what she is writing.

However, the villanelle form in “One Art” is not a traditional villanelle considering that one of the repeated lines is not actually repeated: the message from the line is there but the same words are not. This could be done for one of two reasons. One, it is to provide yet another example of the easiness that is losing. She has lost the traditional form of it. In the poem, it is mentioned that one can lose “places, names, and where it was you meant to travel (8). Names one can lose is an abstract concept; it is not concrete, just how a form of a poem is not concrete since it is not tangible. She could be showing



readers that poetry forms can also be lost.

The second reason as to why “One Art” does not comply with the fixed-form of a villanelle could be because the speaker is slowly starting to realize the truth, her truth. She is beginning to realize that losing is a disaster. One of the lines intended in a villanelle to repeat does not; instead, it is different although the word “disaster” is still included in the lines. The line that is supposed to repeat is “to be lost that their loss is no disaster” (3). However, when it is time for it to be rewritten, it actually becomes “to travel. None of these will bring disaster” (9). It is reworded two more times in lines 15 and 19. If one looks at where the line is first introduced and where it is introduced a second time, it is clear that the line’s alternative phrasing is relatively in the middle. It is as if the rephrased line indicates the speaker steadily accepting the truth.

Thereby, she loses control and structure of the poem, resulting in the line meant to be restated to become something else, with each would-be reiterated line to only have a single word in common: disaster. This word can also be used to characterize the speaker’s attempt to convince her readers and herself of the theme of the poem she wishes to convey.

The speaker’s effort becomes more ineffective when she interrupts her own writing to finally come to the conclusion that she has tried to deny, to ignore, to avoid. Readers know this is an interruption from what she has been trying to get across since the last stanza begins with a dash, which is often used to cut off a thought or statement. This stanza is the speaker’s breaking point, a realization that losing does look like a disaster.

Although she made many endeavors in proving that losing is easy and comes with no disaster, she eventually is defeated

and mentions that she has lost someone. Someone, as it turns out, who was not easy to lose considering that she interrupts herself even more to include characteristics of the person such as “the joking voice, a gesture/ [she loved]” (16-17). The speaker, seemingly broken from defeat, ends up writing the line meant to be restated verbatim incorrectly. Throughout the poem, the line has always been written as “[t]he art of losing isn’t hard to master” (1). It is not until she confesses the truth that the line is written differently, as “the art of losing’s not too hard to master” (18). She even indirectly addresses the readers by apologizing, saying that she “shan’t have lied” about losing

With Bishop’s utilization of hyperbole, untraditional form, and interruption, such a message is conveyed, that self-deception is futile against the truth.

being easy and disaster-free (17). However, this could also have been directed at herself, an apology for self-deception, for denial, of the truth about loss.

Despite the speaker having come to terms for what the truth really is, she still struggles to finish the poem. The poem is filled with lies: loss is not easy to master, loss does look like disaster. The speaker, again, interrupts her own interruption to demand, force, command herself to finish the poem, exclaiming “Write it!” (19). Notice how she did not merely write “Write it”; she includes an exclamation point. With just that mark, the tone of the words change. It is not a nonchalant request or suggestion; it is an order! She is yelling at herself to finish the poem even if the message is not entirely forthcoming. The interjection could also be her dictating herself to write out the truth, forcing herself to write something that she has lied about throughout the entire poem up to the last stanza, to have the truth be written out, to have it out in the open: losing looks like a disaster.



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However, because of such a powerful interruption, she makes a mistake trying to write the truth: repeating the word "like" before and after her interruption. Instead of ending the poem on a high note that publicizes the truth with beauty and poise, her final line reads "though it may look like (Write it!) like disaster" (19). Her mistake further breaks the flow of the poem already disrupted from the dash at the beginning of the last stanza. The truth about loss overpowers the speaker, resulting in a messy ending, but at least the ending is truthful unlike all the stanzas above it. At least the speaker finally embraces the truth that disaster follows lost.

The speaker in Bishop's "One Art" strives to convince her readers that losing items or even abstract concepts should be no big deal since nothing malicious comes from it and that everyone should practice this art because it is simple and effortless. However, she is also trying to persuade herself into believing her lies, thinking that if she can get the readers to think what she is writing is true, maybe she herself may believe it as well. She hides the truth about losing things, both concrete and abstract, but her denial and self-deception are no match for the truth. No matter how much she webbed her lies in the poem, hoping for them to suddenly become true, the actual truth escapes and becomes known in the last stanza. The truth being that losing anything is accompanied by chaos. She can do her best to disregard the truth, but it will be in vain as there is no point in doing so. Her overemphasizing hyperboles, her nonconforming villanelle, her flow-breaking interruptions, and anything else used to argue a false message all come apart as the speaker succumbs to the truth and is no longer able to keep living a lie, the lie she fought so hard to believe. The speaker learns the hard way that the truth shall be free, whether the person wants it to or not. With the truth out, both the speaker and readers know that when loss is in the picture, disaster is in the background.



Winning the War Against My Fear of Cooking

by Noun Neth

For my self-improvement project for English 1A, I decided to learn how to cook. This was an extension of my earlier research assignment about setting up my own food truck business. I grew up as one of those people who couldn't use a knife to cut meat or vegetables and would probably slice my fingers if I tried. I was also afraid to use the stove or oven, because I almost burned the house down while attempting to cook eggs as a child. Prior to this project, my cooking skills consisted of using a can opener to open canned food and operating a microwave oven to heat up frozen meals. I also spent a large amount of money eating at fast food restaurants, and of course I had to hire someone else to cook for me on my food truck. I was tired of feeling useless and unable to make my own meals at home and on the food truck. I wanted to improve

I grew up as one of those people who couldn't use a knife to cut meat or vegetables and would probably slice my fingers if I tried.

my life by learning tips and tricks on how to get comfortable in the kitchen. I started this project hoping to acquire the

essential skills I need to conquer my fear of cooking in the kitchen, make home-cooked meals regularly, and save money by avoiding fast foods and becoming my own cook on my food truck.



The first step I took to accomplish my goal was reading a book called, *Learn to Cook: A Down and Dirty Guide to Cooking (for People Who Never Learned How)* by Hilah Johnson. This book taught me the importance of “reading the entire recipe” before I begin to cook (30). Reading a recipe through will ensure all recipe steps are included and no ingredients are left behind (31). The book also taught me methods on how to memorize measuring ingredients, such as a “fluid ounce is equal to one shot of tequila and that eight shots of tequila is equal to a cup” (56). In addition, I learned some new tricks on using my eyes, also known as “eyeballing measurements,” to measure ingredients by comparing one fist size to an actual measuring cup and using one fingertip to measure the actual size of a teaspoon (61).

The next important step I took to improve my cooking skills was interviewing three chefs and taking cooking lessons from them. The first chef I interviewed was a local restaurant owner, Kimsour Sin. Kimsour has been working in his restaurant business for more than a decade. He is a successful man and makes a six-figure annual income selling American food, Chinese food, and donuts. After our interview, Kimsour showed me how to cook burgers and fries for my food truck business. He taught me how to make fresh beef patties, grill hamburger meat on the griddle, and cook fries in the fryer. Kimsour also gave me his secret recipes for seasoning burger meat and fries.



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The second chef I met was a food truck cook who worked at El Grullense Taco Truck for 2 years and is currently working at Tacos Chapala Loncheria for 4 years now. He told me, “super nachos and supreme fries are the customers’ favorites and the best sellers in the food truck industry.” I asked him how to make these #1 dishes, and he agreed to show me, but with a price. I didn’t want to pay him a percentage of my sold food, so I declined his offer. I decided to learn how to make super nachos and supreme fries by watching YouTube videos. I am happy to report that it is easy to learn from YouTube, so I saved myself a lot of money by using this free resource.

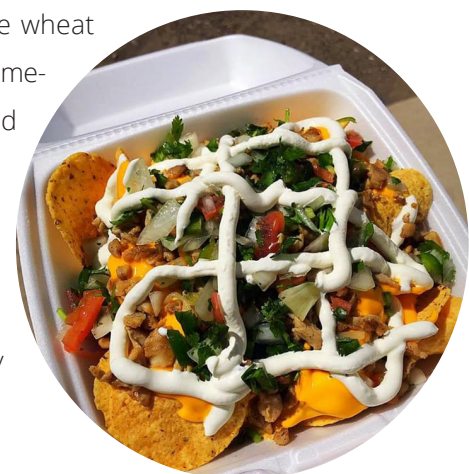
The third chef I interviewed was a cook who completed a Culinary Arts degree at Delta College in 2013 and received a B.S. in Culinary Management at the Art Institute of Sacramento in 2016. Throughout his college years, he worked as a cook at the Bear Valley Lodge, Valley High Country Club, and Cluck N Chuck. Today, he is pursuing a master’s degree and working part-time at Romano’s Macaroni Grill. In addition to our interview,

I asked him to offer me a few pointers on how to cook Mexican rice and burritos. He accepted my requests and showed me how to season Mexican rice with “special sauce” in a rice cooker. Later, he taught me how to make a Mexican burrito. I learned how to cook beef and chicken, prep and fill a tortilla, tightly fold and roll a tortilla into a burrito, and how to heat it on the griddle.

The final step I took to further my knowledge was reading two magazines.

Cooking Light magazine taught me how to make Mexican tacos for my food truck and how to cook healthy meals at home. My favorite part was learning that I can combine corn with tacos by adding “mayonnaise, cilantro, lime juice, ancho chili powder, and 1/8 teaspoon salt” to make a Mexican style street corn (Elotes) tacos (64). I also enjoyed learning how to cook spicy Thai shrimp cakes, grilled rainbow trout with chimichurri, and sesame salmon with kimchi-miso butter. In addition, I found a trick to perfectly cook a fish by indirect grilling. This technique prevents the fish skin from sticking to the grill by “using dual cooking areas, one hot and the other more gentle” (61).

In Taste of Home magazine, I learned a variety of ways to make simple pasta dishes at home. For example, I learned how to cook macaroni pasta by using just “ham, cheddar, peas, pickle relish, and mayo thinned with vinegar” (12). I also learned to make chow mein noodles by using “whole wheat spaghetti pasta with sesame-ginger vinaigrette, cubed chicken, coleslaw mix, and mandarin oranges” (12). In addition, I also discovered useful tips on how to clean my



refrigerator, microwave, and cutting board with vinegar. I learned I can use a mixture of 50-50 vinegar and water to wipe down the walls and shelves on my kitchen appliances (14). I also learned how to remove stubborn spatters by pouring ½ vinegar and ½ water in a glass bowl and heating it in the microwave for 2-3 minutes, and “then wiping the stains with a sponge or soft cloth” (14). I believe a good cook should always keep his or her kitchen clean to avoid germs and bacteria, and of course this is especially important to me as a food business operator.

In conclusion, this self-improvement project helped me overcome my fear of cooking and gave me the courage to work alone in the kitchen at home or on the food truck to serve my customers. As of right now, my whole food truck menu consists of tips and tricks learned from three different chefs, from reading how to cook books and magazines, and from recipes on YouTube videos. I never thought in a million years that I would be able to live without canned food, microwaveable meals, fast food restaurants, and a hired cook. There were also many times when I didn't think I would ever launch my food truck business, but here I am serving customers at San Joaquin Delta College in the Locke 4 parking lot (east of the Locke Center) from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday to Friday, and taking time-off to cater gigs all by myself. I can also be found on Instagram and Facebook @MobileMenuz for more updates on location and hours. I feel thankful and blessed for taking this class with Dr. Hutcheon. I couldn't have done this without the writing assignments, which changed my life around. I am now a proud entrepreneur and successful cook for my food truck.

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Doomsday

by Thomas Hill

Sadly, we've all been a victim of some form of stereotyping. There have been innumerable incidents where I was judged based off my appearance. I can understand why at times because I am a tall guy with a voice that carries I can stand out in a crowd. That doesn't mean an individual can classify me with a certain group due to my situation or race. Being labeled with a negative intent behind it can make a person feel unconformable, and humiliated. This certain situation in particular really put the icing on the cake.

I recently started dating my girlfriend, and things were terrific. Months prior I was in a horrible relationship, so she was a breath of fresh air. Her name is Elyssa and she's a wonderful person with a great sense of humor, and looks to die for. Things were moving along pretty smoothly as Elyssa and I started to get serious. One night while eating dinner Elyssa suggested that I meet her family. I agreed if we were moving on to the next step in our relationship meeting her family was important. There was only one issue lingering in the back of my mind: Elyssa was white. Now I'm not saying there's anything wrong with being white. It's just that society at times doesn't approve of interracial relationships. My feelings were heavily invested in Elyssa, so I would be devastated if a stereotype intervened in our relationship. This frightening thought made me very fearful about meeting Elyssa's family for numerous reasons.

For one I am a black man, second I've never had

dinner with a white family, and last I was meeting her father! That was a huge deal on the count that Elyssa was her father's baby girl, and he wasn't so thrilled about his daughter dating. On top of that, I don't think anyone hinted that she was dating an African American. Doomsday finally arrived, and we were on our way to Elyssa parent's house. We pulled up, and not to my surprise they had a very nice home. We parked the car, and the dreadful journey from the driveway to the front door began. At this time, I began sweating bullets. I started making insane scenarios in my

head. Like what if they don't like me? What if

they tell me to leave? What if this is like the

movie *Get out*, and her family is trying

to hypnotize me? I was losing my

mind at this point! I just wanted to

hop back in the car, and speed

off. Elyssa being the beautiful

soul she is took notice of my

anxiety attack, and tried calming

me down. She gracefully held my

hand, and said "Baby everything

is going to be fine. You don't have

anything to worry about." As she

rang the doorbell, I suddenly felt some

confidence building up inside of me. I started

reassuring myself that Elyssa loves me, so her family should

be happy and accept me. As soon as the door was opening

my confidence shot back down. To our surprise Elyssa's

grandmother was standing there! Elyssa was very excited

because her grandmother lived four hours away.

I was very nervous while she was introducing us.

I couldn't even get my name out right; it was so awkward.



Her grandmother hardly came to town due to the fact she lived far away, so dinner with her parents quickly turned into a family gathering. There was also a football game on that night, so it was loud in the house. That all changed when I walked in. Everyone stopped what they were doing

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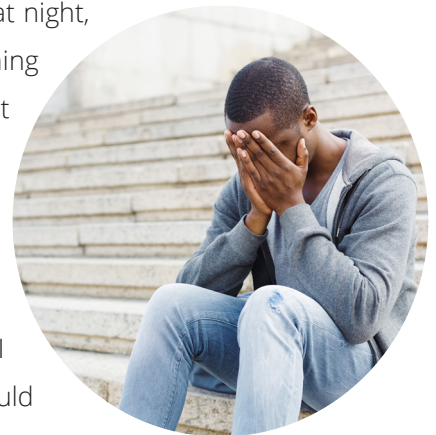
turned, and looked at me. Sort of like Ted's story in the book *Whistling Vivaldi* by Claude Steele, I found myself feeling out of place. "Yet, as he took his seat, he felt a question hanging over his head like a caption in a cartoon: What was this white guy doing in a class on African American politics?" (Steel 85). Panicking I turned to the best thing I knew how to do, and that's make people laugh. I tried breaking the ice with a football joke to get the attention off of me. For the most part, I believe it worked because I got a few chuckles out of the harsh crowd. Moving on we used that opportunity to make rounds and greet everyone.

Elyssa is very loved by her family, so naturally her brothers were very over protective. As we made our way towards them, I started getting dirty and unpleasant looks. I could tell this was the side of the room that wasn't amused by my comedic efforts. In spite of feeling unwanted, I still tried introducing myself. I said "hey, how's it going? I'm Thomas." Elyssa's brother, Paul said "hello" but quickly turned his attention back to the football game. The moment had finally arrived; Elyssa's parents were back from their store run. Elyssa grabbed my hand and began walking toward the kitchen. The same weird emotions that I was feeling at the door were slowly appearing again. "Mom,

Dad" Elyssa said, "This is my boyfriend, Thomas." Her parents weren't looking when she said it because they were still putting the groceries away. When her father finally got the chance to look at me, his eyes got big. He started turning slightly red as he looked me up and down with a confused look on his face. In front of the entire family, he said, "This whole time I thought Thomas was a white guy." He then turned to me, and said "Thomas is a white person's name. I thought black people named their kids Jamel or Tyrone?" As I looked around the house I saw people laughing at me. I never felt such humiliation in my life. I didn't understand the purpose of that distasteful joke. I knew by staying there, this joke more than likely would have been topic of discussion. I then told Elyssa I was leaving. While going out of the house, I didn't speak to anyone.

As I started storming down the street in rage, I heard Elyssa yell out "Babe!" She came sprinting from inside as tears ran down her face. I stopped and waited for her. Before I could even say anything, she began hugging me tightly, she and started apologizing. I then let her know that she didn't need to be sorry for her father's ignorant comment. She knew the damage was done, so we then took off from the party back to Elyssa's house.

Later on that night while watching Netflix, Elyssa got a phone call. It was her mother; she quickly took it to the other room. I could hear her shouting and crying while complaining to her mother. Moments later she came back into the room and handed me the telephone. I picked the phone up said "hello", and to my surprise, it was Elyssa's dad on the line. He started off by saying he was sorry, he had too much to drink that night, and he didn't mean anything by it. I simply told him it was ok; things happen, so don't worry about it. As I hung up the phone, I started replaying the events that occurred. I thought to myself why would



an individual be so small minded as to stereotype a person off of first glance?

This hurtful memory of the first time meeting my girlfriend's family will stick with me forever. Stereotyping is ignorant, and I feel like there should be methods to stop it. No matter what race or age someone is, anyone can be subjected to a form of stereotyping. How he embarrassed me in front of a crowd of people was inappropriate and childish to me. His harsh words made me feel small and very regretful for agreeing to meet them. Even though I was yet again a victim of stereotyping, I still gain a lot from this. Much like in the book *Blind Spot* by Mahzarin R Banaji and Anothny G Greenwald, I was blown away about the knowledge I obtained from this event. "I can't say if I was more personally distressed or scientifically elated to discover something inside my head that I had no previous knowledge of" (Banaji & Greenwald 45). I learned from this incident that other people's judgement shouldn't dictate on how someone feel about themselves. When it was all said and done, I realized I didn't over think it. Doomsday was everything I predicted it would be.



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